

INSPECTION REPORT

GREEN ACRES PRIMARY SCHOOL

Bilston

Wolverhampton

LEA area: Wolverhampton

Unique reference number: 104313

Headteacher: Mrs Brenda Richards

Reporting inspector: Mr Keith Edwards
21190

Dates of inspection: 12-15 November 2001

Inspection number: 199761

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

© Crown copyright 2001

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Lonsdale Road Bilston West Midlands
Postcode:	WV14 7AE
Telephone number:	01902 558275
Fax number:	01902 558277
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Cllr. T. G. Richards
Date of previous inspection:	1 June 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Keith Edwards (OFSTED No: 21190)	Registered inspector	English as an additional language	What sort of school is it?
			How high are standards? a) The school's results and achievements.
			How well are pupils taught?
			How well is the school led and managed?
Tom Heavey (OFSTED No: 19342)	Lay inspector		How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
			How well does the school care for its pupils?
			How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Ray Barton (OFSTED No: 29703)	Team inspector	Mathematics	
		Information and communication technology	
		Art and design	
		Design and technology	
John Brooke (OFSTED No: 11831)	Team inspector	Science	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
		Religious education	
		Physical education	
Pauline Goodsell (OFSTED No:29989)	Team inspector	English	Provision for the pupils' social, moral, social and cultural development
		Special educational needs	
		Music	
Jen Young (OFSTED No: 22396)	Team inspector	Foundation stage	
		Equal opportunities	
		Geography	
		History	

The inspection contractor was:

Sandfield Educational Consultants
16 Wychwood Drive
Trowell Park
Nottingham
NG9 3RB

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	12
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	15
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	17
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	19
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	21
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	22
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	24
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	25
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	29

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Green Acres Primary School mainly serves two large council estates in the suburbs of Bilston. Until 1998 it was a separate infant and junior school on the same campus. The school is part of the "Sure Start" initiative. Almost all of the children have the benefit of attending the school's nursery prior to admission to reception. They are admitted into full-time education at the beginning of either the autumn term or the spring term in each academic year depending on when their fifth birthday falls.

The school is larger than average although numbers are falling. There are 333 boys and girls, organised into 13 single-age classes, as well as 40 children who attend the nursery part-time. It is a multi-ethnic school population and 40 of the pupils have English as an additional language. There is a high incidence of pupil mobility with 33 per cent of the school population either leaving or starting school other than the usual time during the course of the last academic year. The profile of attainment on entry to the nursery is well below average, particularly in language acquisition. Almost 50 per cent of pupils, which is much higher than the national average, are eligible for free school meals. The school has identified 33 per cent of its pupils as having special educational needs, which is well above the national average. None of these pupils (well below the national average) has a statement of educational need.

The school employs 16 full-time teachers, including the headteacher. However, staff recruitment and retention is an issue for the school. Green Acres has made eight appointments to replace teachers who have left in the last two years.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an improving school that provides a sound education. The headteacher provides sound leadership. The school has a positive ethos in which each pupil is valued as an individual. The pupils achieve well in mathematics and science and standards are average at the age of eleven. Standards in English are below average at the age of eleven and could be better. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and the care provided for the pupils is good. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The provision in the Foundation Stage is very good and enables the children to make a good start.
- The pupils make very good progress in mathematics and science.
- The provision for those pupils with English as an additional language is very good and it enables them to make good progress.
- The school provides well for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils.
- The school provides a warm and welcoming atmosphere where the pupils feel secure.

What could be improved

- Standards in reading and writing are too low.
- Standards in information and communication technology are well below average by the time the pupils leave school.
- The role of the subject co-ordinators is underdeveloped.
- The senior staff and governors do not plan effectively for the future.
- Attendance rates are well below average.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection in June 1998. There is a developing sense of teamwork amongst the staff. The school has been successful in meeting some, but not all, of the recommendations of the last inspection report. In particular, the school has improved the pupils'

capacity for their personal study in mathematics and science by providing a range of opportunities for the pupils to carry out investigations and practical experiments. As a result standards in these subjects have risen sharply in the national test results at the age of eleven. Furthermore, standards in art and design, history, physical education and religious education have improved. This represents a good achievement for the school. The school has satisfactorily improved the provision for the pupils with special educational needs. Resources have been enhanced, particularly books and computers. The staff have been involved in a programme of in-service training which has enabled them to develop their skills in information and communication technology and although standards remain well below expectations the school is now well placed to do better. However, even though the Literacy Strategy has been successfully introduced, standards in reading and writing are still not good enough.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			Similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	E	E	E	D
Mathematics	E	C	A	A*
Science	E	C	B	A

Key	
very high	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

Standards are rising and the school meets the targets it sets but there is considerable scope for improvement in reading, writing and information and communication technology. The pupils' attainment on entry to the Foundation Stage covers a wide range but overall it is well below average. Although the pupils make good progress in the nursery and reception classes, many pupils do not achieve the early learning goals in language and mathematics. Most children meet the early learning goals in their personal and social, physical, and creative development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. The "Sure Start" initiative is having a positive impact on raising standards. Although the percentage of pupils achieving the expected grades in reading, writing, mathematics and science in the national tests and assessments at the age of seven has risen significantly since the last inspection, standards in reading and mathematics in 2001 were in the lowest five per cent nationally. The pupils make unsatisfactory progress in literacy in Key Stage 1 and standards should be much better. Evidence from the work seen reflects the pupils' test results. Although the pupils make satisfactory progress in literacy in Key Stage 2, standards are consistently below average for their age. The pupils achieve well in mathematics and science by the time they leave school. In 2001, as a result of the very effective use of booster classes, the pupils' results in mathematics were in the highest five per cent when compared to similar schools. Standards in mathematics and science in the current Year 6 are average. Standards in information and communication technology are below average at the end of Key Stage 1 and well below at the age of eleven. In all other subjects the pupils make sound progress and achieve satisfactory standards. The pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress overall and the pupils with English as an additional language are well supported; this enables them to achieve well.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	The pupils are happy to come to school and work well together. Most pupils are happy to accept responsibility.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Standards of behaviour are satisfactory. Most pupils respond to the behaviour code although a few older pupils are disruptive in class. There have been five exclusions in the last year. However, there is no evidence of bullying or oppressive behaviour among the pupils.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils generally show an appropriate level of maturity and confidence for their age. They are developing their social skills. They are polite and friendly. The quality of relationships in the school is good.
Attendance	Attendance levels are unsatisfactory. There is a high incidence of unauthorised absence and too many children are late at the start of the school day.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.

The school has difficulty in recruiting and retaining suitable teachers. Half of the teaching staff has been appointed in the last two years. All of the teachers teach either literacy or numeracy across the year group in each key stage. This has proved to be far more effective in raising standards in numeracy than it has in literacy. This is because expectations are higher and more effective use is made of assessment to plan mathematics lessons that build on what the pupils already know, understand and can do. However, during the inspection week the quality of teaching and learning was good in both areas. There is some effective use of specialist teaching skills for example in physical education in both key stages. However, when all factors are taken into consideration, particularly the quality of the pupils' work, the overall quality of teaching is satisfactory and it enables the pupils to make sound progress. In almost all lessons seen, the teaching was satisfactory or better. In over half of the lessons seen the teaching was good and in few lessons it was very good. This is an improvement from the findings of the previous inspection. The teachers manage the behaviour of the pupils well and use resources effectively. However, the quality of marking is inconsistent and the homework provision lacks structure. The quality of teaching for the children in the Foundation Stage is good. The teachers are effective because they have high expectations and the quality of the relationships is very good. The school is effective in meeting the needs of most pupils in most subjects. In particular, the needs of the pupils with English as an additional language are well addressed. The school is beginning to make effective use of the new computer suite although it has not yet had an impact on raising standards.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The Foundation Stage curriculum is good. The curriculum in the infants and juniors is satisfactory. It offers a broad range of learning opportunities for all of its pupils and is enriched by a good range of additional activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	There are sound procedures in place for the initial identification and assessment of pupils with special educational needs. The teachers and class assistants work well together to ensure the pupils' individual needs are met. However the co-ordinator has too little release time from her class to check on the progress of the pupils on the register.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The support for pupils with English as an additional language is good overall. When the children are working individually or in small groups with the specialist teacher it is very good.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision made for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. It is reflected in the good attitudes of the pupils, the respect they have for each other's feelings and in the good relationships between adults and pupils.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school has maintained the very high professional standards of care for its pupils identified in the last report but there are weaknesses in the way the school uses its assessment information to set challenging work for the pupils.

The community makes a sound contribution to pupils' learning by promoting a sense of belonging and citizenship. The school does not work closely enough with the parents to support the pupils' learning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The school benefits from sound leadership from the headteacher who has helped to raise standards and brought about improvements in the quality of the educational provision. However, the roles of senior staff require further development to help raise standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body meets all statutory requirements. However, they place too much reliance on the headteacher to provide information about the work of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has drawn up a comprehensive improvement plan based on a recognition of its strengths and weaknesses. However, the plan does not sufficiently prioritise the initiatives to enable the school to focus on the most pressing issues such as raising standards in literacy.
The strategic use of resources	The accommodation is very good. The school endeavours to obtain value for money when considering spending decisions and makes appropriate use of specific grants. Green Acres provides satisfactory value for money despite weaknesses in the strategic development of the

	school.
--	---------

PARENTS’ AND CARERS’ VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school • They feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem • The school expects the children to work hard and achieve well • The teaching is good • Their children are making good progress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The homework provision • The range of activities outside lessons

The parents’ views of the school are positive. The few parents attending the meeting with the inspectors and those responding to the questionnaire agreed that the school cares well for their children. Most parents have confidence in the quality of teaching and consider that the school expects their children to work hard. They feel confident in approaching the school about any problems or concerns relating to their children’s education. The inspectors endorse the parents’ positive views of the school. The inspectors judge that the school provides a good range of activities outside lessons. However, the inspectors agree that homework is provided inconsistently and that more could be done to involve the parents in their children’s learning.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Baseline assessments show that on entry to the nursery and the reception classes, the attainment of most of the children is well below the average for their age. The speaking skills of the children are well below average with many children having a very limited vocabulary. The teaching in the nursery is good and enables the children to make good progress particularly in their speaking and listening. This good progress continues in the reception class where the children start their full-time education. Whilst this progress is good and sometimes very good, the attainment of children at the end of the Foundation Stage remains below average in key areas. The majority of children are unlikely to reach the targets for their age in communication, language and literacy and in their mathematical development. However, the pupils make very good progress in their personal and social development and standards are close to expectations. In the last inspection, standards in the children's creative development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world were below expectations. This is no longer the case. There has been a significant improvement in the progress made in these areas.

2. In 2001, the Year 2 pupils' performance in writing improved markedly in the national tests compared to the results of the previous year but standards were still below average. They were above those achieved by pupils in similar schools. This test result indicates that standards in writing are beginning to improve. Inspection evidence supports this judgement although the pupils' progress is still unsatisfactory. The test results show that the pupils' attainments were in the lowest five per cent nationally in reading and mathematics. In comparison to similar schools the pupils attained standards that were well below average. The pupils' current work shows that standards are well below the national average in reading, writing and speaking and listening and below average in mathematics. Standards are improving more rapidly in mathematics because the school is putting the Numeracy Strategy to good effect and is making better use of assessment. The pupils with special educational needs are sensitively supported and helped to make sound progress, particularly in literacy and numeracy. Overall, the pupils make satisfactory progress in relation to their prior levels of attainment and achieve standards that are average in most subjects at the age of seven. However, in the infants, the pupils make unsatisfactory progress in reading, writing, speaking and listening because of low expectations, inconsistent use of assessment and unsatisfactory links with parents.

3. The National Curriculum assessments for eleven-year-olds in 2001 show that the pupils' attainments were well below the national average in English. However, standards in science were above average and in mathematics they were well above. Analysis of the school's 2001 performance data shows that the pupils' achievements were well above average overall when compared with similar schools. This represents a significant achievement for the school. In mathematics, the pupils' achievements were in the top five per cent when compared to similar schools. The school has been successful in raising standards since the last inspection and over the last two years in particular. The test results for 2001 indicate standards in English, mathematics and science have continued to rise and show a marked improvement in all three subjects on the previous year. However, although the school enables the higher attaining pupils to reach the higher levels in mathematics and science, this is not the case in English.

4. Although, the National Curriculum assessments for eleven-year-olds in 2001 show that the pupils' attainments were well above average in mathematics and above average in science, standards in the work seen of the current Year 6 pupils are close to the national average. This is because the current cohort of Year 6 pupils has a high proportion of pupils on the special educational needs register. Inspection evidence shows that although the pupils are making sound progress in reading and writing standards in the current Year 6 classes are below average. The school is now achieving the challenging targets it sets in the tests for its eleven-year-old pupils. The introduction of the Numeracy Strategy and the more effective teaching have made a significant contribution to the improvement in the pupils' performance in mathematics. The school's monitoring of the introduction of the National

Literacy Strategy has not been as effective in developing a whole-school strategy to raise standards. The school has made satisfactory use of assessment data for setting groups of pupils of different abilities but there is scope for the further refinement of this process to ensure that the work set provides sufficient challenge for pupils of different abilities.

5. Although the pupils make satisfactory progress overall in speaking and listening standards are below average at the age of eleven. The pupils make satisfactory progress in reading. By the time they leave school, most pupils have the basic skills. This includes skimming text to gain an overall impression and scanning to locate information. Their literacy standards enable them to work satisfactorily in subjects where they need to use their reading skills. However, many pupils show an indifference to reading and few have developed appropriate skills to enable them to research information independently from a reference library.

6. Although pupils work in a range of forms including stories, poems, factual accounts and instructions, at the end of both key stages, their attainment in writing is below average. They do become increasingly confident in their use of spelling and grammar and can write for a range of purposes, but their work lacks maturity. Standards of spelling and handwriting are below average and the pupils have a limited range of vocabulary.

7. Standards in mathematics are close to average. The school has successfully introduced the Numeracy Strategy, and is making appropriate use of assessment information to target the teaching. In the last academic year the school made very good use of booster classes to raise the pupils' performance in tests. The school is well placed to continue to raise standards. The pupils are responding well to the Numeracy Strategy and its emphasis on mental mathematics and are making good progress in calculations involving tables and measurement. They apply their skills in numeracy satisfactorily in other subjects such as science and geography.

8. The pupils make good progress in science and standards are above average at the age of eleven. The school has been particularly successful in raising standards year on year in science. Younger pupils engage in practical investigations and can classify materials according to their properties. By the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils engage in investigations and apply sound scientific methods to their conclusions. They check the validity of their predictions and know how to apply the concept of a fair test. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils make good progress in science and that standards are improving.

9. By the time most pupils leave the school, standards in information technology are well below national expectations. They are beginning to benefit from the regular opportunity to work on the new suite-based computers. The pupils have little experience of control technology and make little use of computers to research information or for data handling. The teachers do not plan effectively for the pupils to use information technology to support work in other subjects.

10. Standards in religious education are satisfactory. The pupils have a good understanding of the Christian faith and are able to discuss festivals of other world religions. The school ethos and a range of visits to places of worship support their learning effectively. The pupils' progress is further promoted by the school's emphasis on personal and social development.

11. The pupils' achievement in history and geography is satisfactory. These subjects are supported by clear schemes of work and field visits that stimulate the pupils' interest. Standards in art and design and technology are supported by clear schemes of work and standards are in line with expectations. Art is used well to enhance the quality of display around the school. The pupils achieve satisfactory standards in physical education and music. They join with pupils from other schools in competitive and celebratory events. The pupils enjoy singing.

12. The pupils with special educational needs make sound progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. These pupils are well supported in numeracy and literacy lessons by sensitive staff. The pupils with English as an additional language make particularly good progress when

they are supported directly by a specialist teacher. She is particularly effective in enabling the pupils to express their ideas in discussions and to write them down. These pupils are well supported overall and enabled to make good progress across the curriculum. The high pupil mobility has an adverse effect on standards because too many pupils have had very little stability in their schooling. Although the performance of both boys and girls is below average in English and well below in information and communication technology, standards are rising across the curriculum.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

13. The pupils' good attitudes, personal development and relationships together with satisfactory standards of behaviour make a positive contribution to their learning. These standards are similar to the findings of the last inspection.

14. The pupils are happy to come to school and eagerly make their way into their classrooms at the start of each day. The pupils' good levels of enthusiasm contribute to raising standards by helping to sustain their concentration in lessons, especially where teachers adopt a variety of teaching methods. Interest in lessons is at its best when the pupils are faced with practical challenges, as in a Year 5 mathematics lesson when they were required to count large quantities of various items. Such was their determination that they asked to continue the activity into their lunch break. The pupils happily discuss their work and their favourite subjects.

15. The pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are included in, and encouraged to take part in all the learning activities. They have good relationships with the adults who support them and with the other pupils.

16. Taken as a whole, the pupils' behaviour is satisfactory throughout the school, both in lessons and at play. Strategies are in place which are helping the pupils to improve their behaviour and join in fully with class activities. But for the erratic and sometimes challenging behaviour of a small number of pupils, standards of behaviour would be much better. Such poor behaviour has, on five occasions, tested the school's strong caring ethos to the point where a pupil has been excluded for a fixed period for the sake of all concerned. Most pupils show tolerance and understanding for their peers, and are able to get on with their work, especially when given clear guidance by the adults in the school. In spite of the unusually high number of pupil visits to the first aid station, there was no evidence of bullying or oppressive behaviour among the pupils.

17. The pupils show good levels of personal development, a quality that owes much to the ethos of mutual care and personal responsibility exemplified by adults in the school. The pupils readily take turns in sharing resources and show their delight at the successes of their peers. They are also capable of spontaneous acts of kindness. For example, a Year 1 pupil standing in the queue for lunch, noticed that his classmate's shoelace was undone. Without any prompting he knelt down and expertly tied it again. The other boy duly thanked him. In the upper juniors, the monitors willingly sacrifice their lunch break to care for their younger peers. Such considerate behaviour creates an atmosphere of security and well-being conducive to learning. It is further enhanced by the warm relationships throughout the school. The pupils are polite and friendly, greeting one another warmly, and welcoming visitors. They show good levels of mutual respect regardless of race, gender or religious persuasion, and demonstrate their concern for their peers. Their eagerness to work together in groups or pairs aids their productivity and thereby helps to raise standards in the school.

18. The attendance rate is unsatisfactory. This remains unchanged since the last inspection in spite of the school's strenuous efforts to effect improvement. Unauthorised absence is well above the national average and poor punctuality deprives a significant number of pupils of full access to the curriculum. However, the school's attendance compares favourably with attendance at other schools in this region of the local authority.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

19. The school has difficulty in recruiting and retaining suitable teachers. In the last two years eight new teachers, half of the teaching staff of the school, have been appointed. At the time of the inspection, two out of the 14 classes, both in the juniors, were being taught by temporary teachers. To balance the strengths of the staff, many of the teachers are now teaching in different year groups to the ones they were accustomed to at the end of the last academic year. However, the teachers have adapted well to their new classes and during the inspection week the quality of teaching was good. All of the teachers specialise in either the teaching of literacy or numeracy in the infants and in the juniors. This has proved to be far more effective in numeracy than it has in literacy. There is some effective use of specialist teaching skills for example in physical education in both key stages. However, when all factors are taken into consideration, particularly the quality of the pupils' work, the overall quality of teaching is satisfactory.

20. In all except one lesson observed, the teaching was satisfactory or better. In 54 per cent of lessons, the teaching was good and in 14 per cent of lessons it was very good. Only one lesson was unsatisfactory and that was found in the juniors. This is an improvement on the findings of the last inspection. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is good. The overall quality of teaching in mathematics is good and enables the pupils to develop a secure foundation in the skills of numeracy. In science, the teachers provide a rich variety of opportunities to conduct practical investigations and this has led to an improvement in standards. The quality of teaching in information and communication technology has improved since the last inspection and the school is making satisfactory use of the computer suite. Throughout the school, teachers maintain good standards of discipline, although it becomes increasingly difficult towards the end of the school day with the older pupils. The school is effective in meeting the needs of most pupils in most subjects. In particular, the needs of the pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are well addressed.

21. The class teachers determine the individual education plans of pupils with special educational needs. The plans are reviewed on a termly basis and new targets are set. Although the quality is variable, they are generally well matched to the pupils' needs and identify the small steps needed for them to make good progress. The plans are carried out with liaison between the class teachers and the teaching assistants. The teaching assistants manage the pupils well, they maintain good standards of behaviour, and when well deployed by the teachers effectively use a range of teaching methods. This enables the pupils with special educational needs to make consistently satisfactory progress, and occasionally to make good progress when the work is particularly well matched to their needs.

22. The pupils with English as an additional language receive very good support from a specialist teacher. She enables the pupils not only to understand what is required of them but also to liaise with other pupils. For example, in a successful lesson about Diwali in the nursery class, the teacher helps the child to share his own personal experiences. The teacher uses open-ended questions effectively and enables the pupils to broaden their vocabulary and to use it confidently in lessons.

23. The quality of teaching for children under five in the nursery and reception classes is good in all the areas of learning. The classrooms, particularly the reception classroom, present a stimulating environment. The teachers and the nursery nurses work effectively together, planning activities that show a good understanding of how young children learn. The teachers take every opportunity to ensure individual children feel safe, happy and secure. As a result, the nursery and reception children demonstrate positive attitudes to school. The teachers are effective because they have high expectations and the quality of the relationships is very good. Because many of the children find it hard to communicate, great emphasis is placed on providing opportunities for the children to talk. The quality of questioning during these sessions is very good and a strength of the teachers' work. It is contributing very well to broadening the children's vocabulary.

24. The quality of teaching in the infant classes is satisfactory. The teachers and classroom assistants work effectively together. Classroom displays are informative, providing useful vocabulary

and guidance for the pupils, and attractive. However, because the teachers either specialise in English or mathematics the pupils miss out on the vocabulary of either one of these subjects depending on which is their own classroom base. The behaviour of the pupils is managed well. The teachers maintain effective discipline, but on occasions, when the tasks set for the pupils lack challenge or instructions are unclear, the quality of learning deteriorates. The teachers understand the requirements of the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Learning objectives are clearly shared with the pupils. A further characteristic of many introductory sessions is the good use of questioning. Most teachers ensure that all of the pupils are able to make a contribution by pitching questions at different levels to enable all of the pupils to achieve some success in answering. However, they are less successful in using the plenary session to establish what the pupils have learned and to identify areas of confusion. Furthermore, the quality of marking to help the pupils to improve their work is inconsistent. Although most lessons lack a formal check on what has been achieved, there are good signs that the new Key Stage 1 team has introduced greater rigour into what the pupils should learn in literacy lessons. The basic skills of reading and writing are not yet being systematically taught but the teachers are much more effective in teaching the basic skills of numeracy. This is because the teachers do not make effective use of assessment information in their planning and expectations are too low. An effective partnership with the parents to support the pupils' learning has not yet been established, despite the strenuous efforts of the school.

25. The overall quality of teaching in the junior classes is satisfactory. The teachers plan a stimulating range of activities that engage the pupils and ensure that they remain on task. For example, literacy lessons are effectively taught but the pupils have too much to catch up to enable them to reach the expected standard in writing and spelling by the age of eleven. The teachers have formed good relationships with their pupils and good discipline is maintained in almost all lessons. Religious education is particularly well taught. Good use is made of visits to local places of worship and the pupils are encouraged to explore their feelings and express their ideas. For example, in a successful lesson in Year 6, the teacher used her own wedding dress as a stimulus to promote a lively discussion on vows and commitment. The skills of information and communication technology are being taught well in the computer suite but too little use is made of new technology to support learning across the curriculum.

26. The teachers plan well together to ensure that the pupils in parallel classes receive the same entitlement. Most of the teachers provide constructive oral feedback but their marking is of variable quality. In the best examples the teachers indicate clearly what the pupils need to do to improve. The most successful teaching occurs when teachers assess effectively what the pupils have understood and then give them appropriate work to follow on. Furthermore, not all teachers set an acceptable standard of presentation in their own writing, in the pupils' books and on the classroom boards, and this detracts from the pupils' learning. Homework is used inconsistently to support learning and this is exacerbated by a significant number of families who are not committed to supporting their children's studies outside the school day. In all other respects the teachers provide good role models for their pupils.

HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS OR STUDENTS?

27. The curriculum is satisfactory. The school day provides a good balance of time between the teaching of literacy and numeracy alongside core and foundation subjects. All subjects have been successfully integrated into the curriculum with the exception of information and communication technology. The curriculum for information and communication technology has, however, improved since the last inspection due mainly to the increased expertise of the staff and better resourcing. However, not all of the curriculum targets are being fully met.

28. All statutory requirements are met. The Numeracy Strategy has been effectively implemented and the teaching of numeracy skills is good. The Literacy Strategy has been implemented but less effectively; the teachers' planning does not consistently follow the recommendations. Furthermore, the school needs to ensure that pupils improve their literacy skills

through target setting and better marking. The planning in other subjects is satisfactory. The pupils are taught in a mixture of situations with classes being set within year groups for numeracy and literacy from Year 1.

29. The broad and balanced curriculum, to which all pupils have equal access, includes good provision for the pupils' personal, social and health education along with citizenship. These aspects are linked to the life of the school and all areas of the curriculum at every opportunity when issues such as healthy eating, smoking and the school community are discussed.

30. There are sound procedures in place for the initial identification and assessment of pupils with special educational needs, and for the assessment of their progress against the targets set in the individual education plans. The pupils are taught in a variety of situations, being mainly supported within the classes but also on occasions withdrawn individually, particularly to address behaviour problems. The individual education plans are reviewed each term and new targets set; these are generally well focused and in small enough steps to enable satisfactory progress to be made. The class teachers and teaching assistants work well together to ensure the pupils' individual needs are met.

31. The Foundation Stage curriculum is comprehensive and fully implemented. Baseline assessment is carried out on entry into the reception class and ongoing literacy and numeracy assessments are made throughout the year. The planning for continuity and progression in the Foundation Stage is thorough, with the curriculum planned well to link to the National Curriculum. The teachers' planning shows good coverage of all aspects of the Early Learning Goals and the quality of learning is good. The medium and short-term plans are well focused on the actual learning needs of the reception and nursery children. Short-term key learning objectives based on the 'stepping stones' are carefully planned for each area of learning. The skills to be taught and the focus of learning for nursery and reception are clearly identified. However, the planning has not yet reached the stage where it is structured to ensure that the children's learning is planned progressively for those of different ability levels. Those with special educational needs and those who have less understanding of the English language are catered for very well. From the time children enter nursery and reception, regular assessment takes place. The baseline assessment is repeated at the beginning and end of the reception class. Each child has an individual record of progress for English mathematics and personal and social education and these are used well.

32. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities for its pupils and inspection findings do not support the views of those parents who think otherwise. Sporting opportunities are offered through athletics, football and netball. The school has enjoyed a good deal of success in local sports' competitions and both girls' and boys' teams came first and second respectively in the area finals of a regional science competition. Other activities include recorders, drama, foreign language, choir and a homework club. The curriculum is enriched through a range of day visits to local and regional working museums and a National Trust property, along with visits to local Christian churches and those of other religions. The pupils in Years 5 and 6 have the opportunity to spend a number of days at a residential centre. These visits support both the pupils' learning and their social development. The provision for homework is unsatisfactory and this view is supported by a significant number of parents, albeit a minority.

33. The community makes a sound contribution to pupils' learning by promoting a sense of belonging and citizenship. Visits to Sikh and Hindu temples, help the pupils to acknowledge and respect other religions and cultures. 'Planning for Real', a local community development project, involves pupils working with others from a neighbouring Catholic school to build a model of the local area as a basis for consultation and discussion about improvements. The pupils show their care for others by filling shoeboxes with gifts for disadvantaged children in other parts of the world. Such interactions with the local and wider community make a sound contribution to pupils' learning.

34. Partner institutions, especially the main receiver secondary school and the local education authority's support services make a good contribution to pupils' learning through their well-established and constructive relationships with Green Acres. Cross-phase liaison arrangements are effective in

easing the transition to the secondary school, through exchange visits, “mathematics master classes” and good information and communication technology support. By attending meetings of the cluster group of local schools the headteacher shares common concerns with other member schools, while the good links with Wolverhampton College have resulted in regular student placements and in the establishment of a weekly Family Learning Group for parents of children in the nursery.

35. The provision made for the pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. It is a strength of the school and is reflected in the good attitudes pupils have to school, the respect they have for each other’s feelings, value and beliefs and the good relationships between adults and pupils. The pupils’ spiritual development is well promoted. They are valued as individuals and for their individuality. In class work, assemblies and acts of worship, there are opportunities for the pupils to reflect upon the spiritual dimensions of life and the school makes good use of the teachings of Christianity, and other world faiths to support its provision. A room is provided for pupils to use to be quiet and calm themselves and reflect on the results of their actions on others. The school uses its grounds and the garden to promote a love and awareness of the natural environment.

36. The school works very hard to promote and foster values such as honesty and fairness and is effective in teaching pupils the difference between right and wrong. The teachers make sure the pupils are aware of the code for positive behaviour that includes the development of a sense of personal responsibility for actions. Consequently, most pupils are beginning to accept responsibility for their behaviour. The pupils have opportunities in lessons and at other times to work together co-operatively and to compete fairly. The adults in the school provide good role models for the pupils, who learn courtesy and respect in their dealings with adults and one another.

37. The school has developed a range of opportunities for the pupils to experience social activities. For example the introduction of circle time enables the pupils to build relationships with members of their class apart from their immediate friends. Regular charity days are held so that the pupils learn about and support the needs of people in different situations and the choir entertains older members of the community. The pupils are encouraged to take on responsibilities, such as helping in the dining room, looking after younger children in the corridors and collecting any rubbish in the grounds, to help in the running of the school.

38. The school works well to promote the pupils’ knowledge of their own cultures and provides opportunities to consider some not represented in the school. The youngest children are involved in a link with a nursery in India, supported by a family at the school, and they exchange photographs and letters. A Diwali party was held during the inspection and the children enjoyed music, dancing and food. In music, the school provides the pupils with opportunities to listen to and appreciate a range of styles and forms. In art lessons, the pupils learn about a good range of artists and art forms, such as the work of William Morris, Edvard Munch and the dramatic depiction of ‘*The Great Wave*’ by Katsushika Hokusai. In Year 6 literature lessons, when the pupils study *Macbeth*, they begin to appreciate the rhythm of language and ways to use it in writing their own poems and stories. Visiting workshops and resident artists enhance the opportunities for the pupils to experience, enjoy and participate in live music and dance or enter into the lives of the Romans and Vikings.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

39. The school has maintained the very high professional standards of care for its pupils identified in the last report. The very good provision for the health, safety, welfare and personal security of its pupils is one of its major strengths, resulting in an atmosphere of confidence and wellbeing that makes a significant contribution to raising standards.

40. There are very good arrangements for child protection. The headteacher ensures that adults in the school are familiar with procedures and maintain a high level of alertness. The strong sense of “family” promoted by the school ensures that parents and children find it easy to approach the school with any problems or concerns they might have. The careful arrangements for the personal security of the children promote a climate of security and confidence that greatly aids their learning, and makes

them feel valued. The comprehensive range of policies and procedures relating to health and safety are fully implemented and regularly reviewed. A good example of the school's very good provision for the pupils' welfare is the arrangements for first aid.

41. The effectiveness of the school's good procedures for monitoring and improving attendance have brought about a slight improvement. The culture of non-attendance and lateness is perpetuated by a significant number of parents who fail in their duty to support their children's regular attendance at school, thereby denying them full access to their education. The difficulties experienced by the school in securing a productive partnership with parents have resulted in lost opportunities for shared learning between home and school.

42. The school's good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour continue to achieve a satisfactory outcome by helping to engage children in their learning. The detailed behaviour policy is supported by a simple code of conduct posted up around the school. In order to support its troubled or disaffected children the school has appointed its own social inclusion person who sits with such children or withdraws them from the classroom when they become distressed. The provision of a quiet room, known as the base, offers such children the opportunity to calm down in a relaxed environment where they can talk about their problems. This strategy is proving very effective in helping not only those individuals but also the main group of pupils who are then able to concentrate on their work without distraction. Behaviour tracking and the setting of targets for troubled individuals act as additional incentives for pupils to develop higher expectations of themselves.

43. The school's procedures for monitoring and supporting the pupils' personal development are good because they make full use of the staff team's detailed knowledge of the pupils and their circumstances. The school's exceptionally strong caring ethos inspires adults in the school to make the children feel valued and to promote their self-esteem as well as a respect for others. These ideals are most effectively promoted in the exemplary conduct of the staff whose compassionate, tolerant yet firm treatment of the children in their care sets them up as models of citizenship and personal responsibility. The message is reinforced in the award assemblies where individual effort, good behaviour and acts of kindness are rewarded as well as academic achievement.

44. The pupils with special educational needs receive good support from staff within the school, the adults know the pupils well and are committed to helping the pupils achieve their personal targets. A particular strength is the way in which pupils who have emotional and behavioural difficulties are supported and helped to overcome their difficulties. There are satisfactory procedures in place for monitoring the pupils' with special educational needs academic progress and personal development. Statutory requirements with regard to special educational needs are carried out and there are effective arrangements in place to make use of support from external agencies. At present, ten pupils are being assessed for a statement of special educational need. The pupils with English as an additional language are effectively supported by a specialist teacher who works on a part-time basis in the school. She teaches groups of children and ensures good liaison with their parents.

45. Procedures for assessing the pupils' attainment and progress are now in place for the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. The children are assessed shortly after they start in the reception class and again at the end of the Foundation Stage. This information is used to organise ability groups in English and mathematics across the school. At present, these groupings are too general to ensure that the individual needs of pupils with less ability in one of these subjects are catered for effectively. The strategies to monitor individual pupil's progress and thus alter groups to meet their needs as they arise are in the early stages of development. In the Foundation Stage, individual records are kept indicating how the children are progressing in English, mathematics and personal and social education. In Key Stages 1 and 2, the teachers fill in an evaluation sheet at the end of the week, indicating how the class, groups and sometimes individual pupils are progressing in their learning in aspects of the core subjects. These are not being used consistently to plan the next stages of the pupils' learning.

46. Each year, two samples of work in English and mathematics are kept for each child in order to track improvement over time. This information builds into a comprehensive pupil profile by the time pupils reach Year 6. These procedures and regular assessments at the end of term, identified higher achieving pupils in Years 4, and 5. As a result, a successful booster class has been set up in Year 5. However, the school has still not reached the stage where individual pupil progress is identified and monitored systematically in each class. Assessment information is not used in each year group to enable targets to be set for pupils of all abilities. Furthermore, assessment information is not used effectively to guide the next stage of teachers' planning. Although the school has begun to address this area, a weakness still remains.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

47. The difficulties experienced by the school in securing a productive partnership with parents have remained since the previous inspection, resulting in lost opportunities for shared learning between home and school.

48. By contrast, the parents' views of the school remain very positive. The few parents attending the meeting with the inspectors and those responding to the questionnaire agreed that the school cares well for their children. The great majority of them state that their children like coming to school, that they behave well, and that they make good progress. A high percentage of parents report that teaching is good, that the school expects their children to work hard, that it helps them to become mature, and that the school is well led and managed. They also declare that they are kept well informed about their children's progress, and that they would feel confident in approaching the school about any problems or concerns relating to their children's education.

49. In spite of the satisfactory quality of information provided by the school the effectiveness of its links with parents remains unsatisfactory, because the school's efforts are frustrated by very limited parental support. The governors' annual report is published jointly with an informative and easily readable prospectus. Both comply with legal requirements, and are provided for each family with children attending the school. The frequently published newsletter informs parents about school events, and is supplemented by separate letters relating to particular activities. The improved format of pupils' annual reports includes individual attendance records, and provides brief coverage of all subjects. Areas for further improvement are identified, and parents are invited to sign and comment on the report. The termly open evenings provide parents with the opportunity to discuss their children's progress. The fact that they are not well attended by parents strengthens the view of the inspectors that much work is yet to be done to involve parents more effectively in the life of the school.

50. Overall, the school tries hard to build good partnerships with the parents and carers of those pupils with special educational needs. The parents are invited to the regular reviews of the progress the children are making and are kept informed as to the targets set for their children. Parents and carers do not often take up these opportunities. However most of the parents of pupils with behavioural problems are supportive of the school. This helps their children to make good progress in achieving the targets in their individual plans to improve their behaviour.

51. The contribution made by parents to their children's learning remains unsatisfactory because there is only limited co-operation between the school and home in supporting the children's efforts, particularly in reading. The value of parent input was seen recently when a mother brought in some special food to show pupils how the feast of Diwali is celebrated. However, many parents do not help their children with their reading or with other work at home. Only one or two parents are said to help regularly in the classroom, and poor attendance at open evenings further lessens the impact of parents' involvement on the education of their children. Social and fundraising events on the other hand are well attended, the Christmas Fayre, and Bring and Buy Sales being particularly popular. The Friends of Greenacres have contributed about £1000 to the school's amenities. Such activities offer potential for

further development in the school's relationship with parents, and therefore in the education of their children.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

52. The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory overall. The school benefits from sound leadership from the headteacher who has helped to raise standards and brought about improvements in the quality of the educational provision since the last inspection. The headteacher has established an effective working partnership with the recently appointed deputy headteacher. She has been successful in maintaining the tone of the school that was reported in the previous inspection. This is based on the ethos of social inclusion and high expectations of the pupils' behaviour and courteousness. Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds are happy in school and share its values; this is reflected in the pupils' behaviour and in the positive relationships which prevail. However, she has not yet been successful in establishing rigorous monitoring and evaluating procedures to ensure that initiatives are fully implemented and are achieving the desired effect.

53. The school is successful in meeting its aims that focus on the personal development of each child. The ethos of the school, which is strong on the pastoral aspects of the curriculum, is good. The school has successfully integrated pupils from a range of backgrounds. The school copes very well with the high mobility of its pupils and the difficulties of recruiting and retaining teachers.

54. The headteacher, who has been in post since just after the last inspection, provides a good exemplar for the ethos of the school. She knows the school and pupils well and gives good support. There is a developing sense of staff teamwork. The school has been successful in meeting some, but not all, of the recommendations of the last inspection report. In particular, the school has improved the pupils' capacity for the pupils' personal study in mathematics and science by providing a range of opportunities for the pupils to carry out investigations and practical experiments. This has resulted in a significant improvement in the pupils' test results at the end of Key Stage 2. Resources have been enhanced, particularly books and computers. The staff have been involved in a programme of in-service training which has enabled them to develop their skills in information and communication technology and although standards remain well below expectations the school is now well placed to do better. However, even though the Literacy Strategy has been successfully introduced, standards in reading and writing are still not good enough.

55. The school has satisfactorily improved the provision for the pupils with special educational needs. The co-ordinator has worked systematically to develop the school's policy and overall approach to special educational needs. The teachers are aware of procedures for identifying, assessing and providing for the pupils with special educational needs and the parents know who are the main points of contact in the school. However, the co-ordinator has no regular release time in which to carry out her role: this is not satisfactory in a school that has 33% of its pupils on the register for special educational needs. In time outside of lessons the co-ordinator has to complete paper work for statutory requirements, check and review pupils' progress, liaise with outside agencies, oversee the organisation of the school's support for pupils with special educational needs, and meet with parents and staff. This reduces the effectiveness of the support and the rate of the pupils' progress.

56. There are weaknesses in the strategic management of the school. Staff and governors share a commitment to school improvement but the leadership has not fully addressed the focus required by the last inspection to raise standards in literacy. This is because the school has lacked rigour in its approach to achieving improvement in this key area. Furthermore, most of the subject co-ordinators lack experience. They have not been empowered to evaluate the teaching and learning in their subject or to develop their area of responsibility in a planned and systematic way. The monitoring of teaching and curriculum development and the impact of these elements on standards are weaker areas of the school's work. The roles of key members of staff such as the deputy headteacher and the special educational needs co-ordinator need redefining to improve their effectiveness.

57. The governing body complies with statutory requirements, including collective worship, sex education, and the provision for those pupils with special educational needs. However, the governing body has yet to establish an efficient structure of committees to monitor the work of the school regularly. Although the chair of governors is a regular visitor to the school and has a good knowledge of the staff and the pupils, the governors' role is underdeveloped. Individual governors are taking an interest in specific aspects of school life but are not active in monitoring the effectiveness of policy decisions. Not all governors have the benefit of recent and relevant training and they rely too heavily on guidance from the headteacher. As a result they are not in a good position to challenge or question the school about its provision and the standards it achieves.

58. There have been substantial improvements to the staffing ratios and to the fabric of the building; the accommodation is very good and has a positive impact on the quality of learning. However, the development plan does not sufficiently prioritise initiatives. It is a much more focused document than it was, but it does not give sufficient priority to raising standards in literacy. The school is prudent in its accounting systems. The administrative team maintains a careful overview of all the school's financial spending and ensure that the headteacher, staff and governors have full information to aid their decision-making. The school makes sound use of specific grants. For example, the school has improved its capacity for the support of those pupils for whom English is an additional language and this has been very successful. However, the school has not fully addressed the recommendations of the last audit report in that the school does not maintain an up-to-date inventory. Although the school is beginning to seek value for money when considering spending decisions on services, more could be done to evaluate the outcomes. The school has made sound progress since the last inspection and is satisfactorily placed to continue to improve. Green Acres provides satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

43. In order to raise standards and improve the quality of the provision the school should address the following issues.
1. Raise standards in literacy, particularly in Key Stage 1, and by the time the pupils leave school by:
 - (a) using assessment information to group the pupils more effectively and to provide greater challenge for pupils of differing abilities (paragraphs 24, 80)
 - (b) making consistent use of the school's marking policy to ensure that it helps the pupils to improve their work (paragraphs 24, 80)
 - (c) insisting on an improvement in the pupils' standard of presentation and handwriting (paragraphs 26, 78)
 - (d) strengthening links with parents and making more effective use of homework (paragraphs 26, 76)
 - (e) raising teacher expectations (paragraph 26,79)
 - (f) increasing the involvement of the co-ordinator (paragraph 56)
 2. Raise standards in information and communication technology by
 - (a) making effective and efficient use of the information and communication technology suite (paragraph 117)
 - (b) extending the use of information and communication technology across the curriculum (paragraph 114)
 3. Develop the roles of the headteacher, subject co-ordinators and governors in monitoring the work of the school, taking effective action to raise standards and sharing good practice.

This process should include:

- (a) developing the role of subject co-ordinators in monitoring the quality of teaching and managing their subject (paragraph 56)
 - (b) ensuring the development plan has clear priorities that focus on raising standards, especially in literacy, to improve the strategic development of the school (paragraph 56)
 - (c) ensuring full compliance with the recommendations of the audit report (paragraph 58)
4. Continue to raise attendance levels through an improved partnership with the parents (paragraphs 18 and 41)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	85
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	31

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	14	46	24	1	0	0
Percentage	0	17	54	28	1	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. [When the total number is substantially less than 100, add] Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one [two, three, etc] percentage point[s]. [Where the total is close to or greater than 100, use only the first sentence.]

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR– Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	20 FTE	333
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		186

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	123

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	30

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	69
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	71

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	8.7
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	2.2
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	33	26	59

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	22	20
	Girls	19	22	20
	Total	36	44	40
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	61 (56)	75 (52)	68 (63)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	20	28
	Girls	22	22	25
	Total	42	42	53
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	71 (55)	71 (61)	90 (72)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	23	26	49

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	19	20
	Girls	16	20	23
	Total	30	39	43
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	63 (54)	80 (77)	90 (89)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	17	18
	Girls	16	21	22
	Total	25	38	40
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	51 (58)	78 (65)	82 (81)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	40
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	
Indian	34
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	323
Any other minority ethnic group	

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	1	
Black – African heritage	1	
Black – other		
Indian		
Pakistani		
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White	3	
Other minority ethnic groups		

This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	14
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24
Average class size	26

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	155

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	35
Number of pupils per FTE adult	13

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
----------------	-----------

	£
Total income	790790
Total expenditure	762486
Expenditure per pupil	1803
Balance brought forward from previous year	15154
Balance carried forward to next year	43458

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	8
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	8

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	373
Number of questionnaires returned	87

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	65	28	3	2	1
My child is making good progress in school.	55	36	6	3	
Behaviour in the school is good.	36	43	10	6	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	34	38	15	6	7
The teaching is good.	52	43	1		5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	45	39	11	5	
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	68	30	2		
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	64	35			1
The school works closely with parents.	43	39	14	3	1
The school is well led and managed.	43	36	13	3	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	48	38	9	3	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	29	35	15	5	16

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

60. The children in the Foundation Stage are taught in the nursery and two reception classes. In the nursery, the children attend part-time for either a morning or afternoon session. Most of the children transfer to the reception classes in the September or January before their fifth birthday. A minority of reception children has no pre-school experience. As the inspection took place in the autumn term, only one reception class was operating. The overall attainment of the children on entry into nursery is well below that expected nationally. Social skills are poorly developed for many and a small minority speak English as an additional language. Assessment at the beginning of reception indicates that for the majority of children, language, literacy and early mathematics skills are below what is expected for this age.

Personal, social and emotional development

61. The children make good progress in their personal and social development because the school gives it high priority and promotes it effectively both in the nursery and reception class. The teachers take every opportunity to ensure individual children feel safe, happy and secure. As a result, the nursery children have positive attitudes to school. Because many of the children find it hard to communicate, great emphasis is placed on times when they can sit in small groups with adults. These activities cater well for those who are slowly gaining confidence to experiment or participate. In this way the children are introduced very well to school routines. They are encouraged to begin to voice their likes and dislikes, share and take turns. The reception children are taught to work and play co-operatively, and slowly increase their understanding of acceptable behaviour.

62. The children's personal independence is developing well; most of the children are likely to meet the targets for their age. Many children in the nursery and reception classes make good attempts at taking care of themselves. The older children are developing a good understanding of what is expected of them and learning the difference between right and wrong. This increasing independence and eagerness to participate in tasks enables them to make choices for themselves, be responsible and care for the things they use. In the nursery and reception classes, the children are learning to work well together as part of a group or independently. The reception class children persevere with activities without direct supervision. Although many nursery children are at the stage of playing alongside each other within a group task, the older reception co-operate well when sharing resources. Adults ensure that children are clear about expectations for behaviour and as a result, it is often very good. Teaching in this area is good overall with examples of very good teaching. Very good relationships exist between all the staff and the children. Good provision is made for those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language. The children are well-integrated into class. The strong focus put on daily routines and personal and social development activities impacts very positively on the overall attainment and progress made by the children.

Communication, language and literacy

63. The quality of teaching in this area of learning is good. By the end of reception, half of the children are likely to reach the level expected for five-year-olds. Many of the children in the nursery, including those who have English as an additional language find it difficult to express themselves clearly in sentences. They make their needs understood by using a mixture of single words and gestures to convey meaning. They are given every opportunity to copy the good examples of speech and language offered to them by their teachers, one of whom is bilingual. Definite times are set for specific speaking and listening skills to be developed, such as small group times and whole class story and discussion times. The quality of questioning during these sessions is very good and a strength of the teachers' work. It is contributing very well to broadening the children's vocabulary and enabling

accelerated progress in this area. In the reception class, most children listen attentively to their teacher. Many wait without interrupting until it is their turn to speak and are eager to contribute to discussions and conversations. A minority has good levels of fluency. Most use their developing vocabulary well, expressing ideas and opinions independently. They choose words carefully and thoughtfully when asking and answering questions. They understand that print carries meaning and progress in early reading is evident as they share books although very few are reading simple texts on their own. In the nursery, the children are encouraged to recognise their name cards at each session. This practice is developed as the reception children write their names to identify belongings whenever possible.

64. Mark making is practised in a variety of activities throughout the Foundation Stage. The nursery children frequently trace, draw, crayon, and experiment with dough. They are encouraged to 'write' independently or produce drawings for the notice board. In the reception class, the necessary skills for the more formal aspects of writing are developing successfully. However, some children experience difficulty with pencil control skills and letter formation. Although the higher attaining older children have reached the stage of knowing what they want to write, few are at the stage of attempting some form of independent writing. Many reception children are mastering copy-writing skills competently.

Mathematical development

65. In the nursery and reception classes, mathematical learning is promoted through a range of practical tasks. Many children need more time to achieve the level expected of them. The nursery children play mathematics games and begin to develop their knowledge of number as they count and sort bricks, shapes and toys. They make up games as they match familiar objects by colour. Older reception children extend their previous learning by estimating and balancing. They compare size and shape with increasing accuracy. With adult prompts, they compile sets of objects according to the different criteria suggested. The most fluent children are confident to explain why they make certain decisions when making choices in the sand. Whilst completing tasks, filling and emptying containers, they learn to estimate and consider why during an experiment the expected outcome is sometimes different from what actually happens.

66. In the reception class many children count to ten and work more confidently with numbers up to five. Higher-attaining children, with support, are developing a secure understanding of simple addition facts up to five. The teaching is good overall, with examples of very good teaching. In the nursery, a range of simple mathematical terms is introduced, as the children investigate comparisons of shapes in the sand. When sharing milk and snacks, they tally numbers based on situations from every day life. Problem solving is introduced by matching colours, sizes and shapes when using three-dimensional equipment to build car tracks and roads. Mathematical understanding is further developed by ordering patterns, jigsaws or when using construction toys.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

67. By the end of their reception year, most of the children are likely to attain the level expected for their age. The children who have English as an additional language sometimes have difficulty in expressing their ideas to make connections between past, present and future events. To compensate for this, the adults in the nursery reinforce this understanding very effectively by offering many opportunities to handle things and to understand what they are. The children practise every day events, such as making jelly, noticing how the ingredients change when they are mixed and cooled. This is extended in reception when trips to places of interest during year enhance children's understanding of the local environment. Throughout the Foundation Stage, the birth of a new baby in the family and individual children's birthdays are treated as special times. As they learn to recognise more life skills, they recognise how they have changed over time. In nursery and reception, the daily routine includes ordering and recognising the days of the week, different weather conditions and raising awareness of how the sessions are organised. Higher attaining reception children are developing some understanding of the order of events in the school day. Most know what happens at

assembly and dinnertime and many record their findings in drawings and pictures. Other reception children are increasingly confident as they find their way around school, describing how to get to the playground or dining hall, often using gestures to identify directions. Technological skills are developing well. The children cut, stick and join as they construct three-dimensional models using re-cycled materials and construction kits. Small groups of children are carefully guided through the different skills needed to successfully make Diwali biscuits or in the nursery make jelly into a creature. The children in both classes are encouraged to use the computer competently to create pictures, complete jigsaws, form pairs and sets of objects. The teaching is very good because the adults offer high quality opportunities for children to investigate and problem solve as they learn more about themselves and their environment.

Physical development

68. Most children will have reached the standard expected of them by the time they finish the reception year. The teaching is good overall, with very good teaching in reception movement lessons. The outdoor play experiences offered to the youngest children gives satisfactory opportunities for them to practise and improve their manipulative skills in the nursery. They steer the wheeled toys with confidence and reasonable accuracy. A variety of activities that extend their manipulative and physical skills are also offered in the classroom. They gain finer control through cutting, painting and building and benefit from the times allocated to showing them how to use tools, equipment and materials. The staff appreciate that the children's handling and use of pencils, crayons and other tools is less accurate and many need continued practice in small hand control skills to enable them to write letters and numbers more easily as they progress through school. These skills continue to develop successfully in the reception classes. Most reception children are learning to move confidently, imaginatively and with good directional control. Proficiency is shown when moving at different speed as they practise routines in the hall. Those in the reception class use the school hall for games and dance. A very good creative movement lesson enabled children to move in a variety of ways whilst following instructions carefully. They demonstrated a good awareness of space and their own and others' safety. They joined in circle games with chosen children wearing Diwali costumes to dramatise 'A princess long ago'. At playtimes children make up rules and join in playground games to further develop effective control of their bodies. The teaching for this area of learning is good overall because adults encourage the children to persevere in order to improve what they do. Although the outside playground is safe, it lacks sufficient challenge. For example, the reception children have no opportunity to steer and manipulate a range of wheeled toys or to experience regularly large climbing apparatus. Although work to extensively develop the outside area is taking place, at present the provision is unsatisfactory and this impedes progress.

Creative development

69. Most children are likely to achieve the level expected for their age by the time they reach the end of the reception year. Most of the creative elements, including sand; water and using paint are available for some part of each day.

70. As they mature, the children make good progress in acquiring a range of creative skills. They listen carefully to music, with older and more confident children singing a range of previously learned songs with some understanding of the tune. They explore pitch, singing loudly or quietly, and accompany simple songs using percussion instruments. Younger nursery children beat simple rhythms when listening to taped rhymes and songs. Many opportunities are provided for the nursery children to explore colour, shape and texture. When choosing colours and materials they show growing understanding of how to shade colours when making Diwali cards for their nursery friends in India. Both in nursery and reception, good opportunities are provided for role-play. The nursery children discover how to dress and undress as they organise their house. The children are beginning to learn the importance of co-operating as they play together and act out different situations spontaneously and inventively. Tools, scissors and a variety of brushes are used with increasing competence as they complete their tasks. Teaching is good overall. The children are offered many opportunities in integrated activity sessions to experiment and learn by a process of trial and error. This impacts

significantly on the quality of learning for all children. A major strength in nursery and reception is the quality of the relationships that exist. The adults are well prepared and work extremely effectively together. This has a positive impact on how those with special educational needs and those who speak English as a second language learn.

ENGLISH

71. Standards in work seen in English by the age of eleven are below national expectations. The school's results have improved steadily over the past two years but standards are still not high enough. By the time they leave school, standards in English are below those achieved in mathematics and science. The pupils enter the school with well below average skills in speaking and listening, in reading and in writing. In the infant classes they make unsatisfactory progress in reading and writing and this means they are disadvantaged in the junior classes.

72. The school's progress in raising standards since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory and there is still much to be done. Although the school carried out an action plan incorporating the requirements of the inspection this has not had the effect of raising standards. All the pupils have equal opportunities to participate in the activities provided by the school. The pupils with special educational needs receive satisfactory support that enables them to make sound progress in learning the basic skills. The pupils with English as an additional language are well taught and this enables them to make good progress in reading and writing. The school recognises that English standards and progress could be better, particularly in reading and has identified this as an area for development in its school improvement plan. However, the school has not given raising standards in literacy sufficient priority.

73. When the pupils enter the school, many of them lack confidence in speaking and the pupils' speaking and listening skills are underdeveloped at both key stages. The pupils listen carefully to their teachers and to each other, but they do not always answer questions confidently or are able to give explanations for an answer. The junior pupils contribute to discussions although they often need encouragement from the teachers and questions rephrasing before they can understand them. As time goes by the pupils acquire a wider vocabulary with which to discuss their work. For example, they use appropriate scientific terms to describe their investigations and can suggest alternative adjectives to use in the descriptions of characters they are writing about.

74. In the infants and juniors, the more able pupils read fluently and accurately. However the majority of the pupils do not attain satisfactory standards in reading by the age of seven. Most of the pupils can use initial sounds to help them build simple words but the skills to tackle harder or unfamiliar words are underdeveloped. The school has recently introduced a new reading scheme and this is beginning to help the pupils in the infants to make better progress. But the teachers' expectations are too low and this limits the pupils' progress. In the juniors, the pupils who have not yet achieved fluency and accuracy in reading continue to make slow progress. No pupils use the library referencing system confidently to locate the books they need. This is mainly because the school library is used infrequently and library skills are not taught systematically. However, the most fluent readers develop a critical appreciation of the books they read and are able to compare, for example, the written portrayal of the *Harry Potter* characters with those in the film.

75. Overall, the pupils have positive attitudes towards the books they read and enjoy reading but opportunities to develop good reading habits and to tackle challenging texts are limited. The teachers do not always respond to the needs of individual pupils although they carry out the group reading sessions with the pupils during the daily Literacy Hour. The use of the school library is minimal and the pupils have little idea as to how they can find information from different sources. A few pupils use the town library. The school's arrangements for developing a home-school reading partnership are not carried out consistently. There is a variation in how often the pupils take books home or change them, and in the way any reading done at home is recorded. There is insufficient guidance from the school to help or encourage the parents to use the home/school reading diaries to make comments about their

children's reading. These factors contribute to the slow progress made by many pupils in learning to read.

76. By the age of seven, the pupils are beginning to express themselves in their writing. They can form simple sentences. All but the lower attaining Year 2 pupils know how to punctuate their writing using full stops and capital letters. The most able pupils spell common words correctly. However, most pupils make unsatisfactory progress; they do not use their knowledge of spelling rules and letter strings to make informed attempts at spelling less familiar words. They do not use joined writing and in a few cases the pupils' presentation of their work is untidy.

77. By the time they are eleven, most pupils have a secure grasp of how to punctuate their sentences. The higher attaining pupils are using speech, question and exclamation marks appropriately. A few pupils show imagination and flair in short pieces of writing. They are confident in their use of adjectives to help them write more interesting sentences. In one good writing session, the pupils wrote lively descriptions of characters because the teacher, through skilful questions and the use of well-prepared resources, met the writing needs of each group of pupils well. In a history lesson the pupils made good use of their literacy skills to write interesting diaries of the lives of ladies' maids, gardeners' boys and housemaids in Victorian times. The pupils use word processing programs to plan, draft and edit pieces of writing but overall the use of information and communication technology is limited. The main weakness in the writing is the pupils' lack of depth and understanding of language which limits their ability to develop sustained writing in a range of forms. Throughout the school, the standards of handwriting and presentation are not high enough. The pupils are taught a joined script too late to develop a fluent, legible style although by the age of eleven most can print neatly.

78. The teaching is satisfactory overall. Of the seventeen lessons seen the teaching was good or better in eleven of them. There were no lessons in which the teaching was unsatisfactory. The teaching has some significant strengths. In the lessons where the teaching was good, the pupils were presented with challenging texts and made aware of what it was they were to learn by the end of the lesson. The teachers make good use of resources to support the learning, including well-chosen texts and imaginative presentations of the material. They encourage pupils to explore and share ideas through skilful questioning. For example, in a good lesson, the most able Year 6 pupils explored strong descriptive language when they learned about the victorious return of *Macbeth* and *Banquo* after a battle and imagined the conversation as they approached the three witches. In a Year 3 lesson, the teacher used a play script very well to teach the way plays are put together and differ from other forms of writing. She involved all the pupils in reading the parts and extended their knowledge of how punctuation aids understanding of the text. The teaching of writing ensures that by the time the pupils are eleven they have experience of writing across a wide range of forms.

79. However, there are weaknesses in the teaching. The basic skills of reading and writing are not yet being taught systematically. The school is not using assessment information consistently to plan the work for different groups of pupils. This is particularly the case in the infant classes and has led to unsatisfactory progress in reading and writing. Furthermore, even though the school has identified standards in English as an area for improvement, there is not yet a full and coherent plan to raise literacy standards throughout the school. The teachers' expectations of their pupils are too low and this limits their progress. In all years, the pupils are grouped according to their ability and each year group is taught English by one of the two teachers. This limits the opportunities for the teachers to follow up work or to reinforce literacy skills in other areas of the curriculum. One classroom in each year group is dedicated to literacy and the other to numeracy. This means that although there are helpful and interesting displays to support teaching English in one class the pupils from the other class only have access to them during the literacy session. A significant weakness of the teaching is the erratic quality of the marking. In a minority of classes the pupils' work is annotated with helpful comments and guidance that help the pupils to improve their work but this is not the case throughout the school. There are sound arrangements in place to check the overall progress of the pupils. However, this information is not always used accurately to inform the teachers' planning or to make the pupils aware of what they need to learn next. This means that in some classes progress is too slow.

80. The subject manager for literacy has had few recent opportunities to check what is happening in other classes to ensure that the National Literacy Strategy is being carried out systematically. This means that she is unable to strengthen the teaching by sharing good classroom practice and by knowing what needs to be done to improve the subject overall.

MATHEMATICS

81. Standards in mathematics at age seven are below average and at eleven they are average. By the time the pupils leave the school at the age of eleven they have made very good progress since starting school.

82. The end of key stage national tests for seven year old pupils show that for 2001, and for the previous 3 years, attainment has been well below the national average. However evidence gained during this inspection shows that standards in Key Stage 1 are rising. This is occurring because of good teaching, the leadership of the co-ordinator and the effects of the National Numeracy Strategy that has now become established. The attainment of eleven-year-old pupils in their end of key stage national tests has improved over the last three years. The results of the most recent end of Key Stage 2 tests, taken in May 2001, show that the attainment of that group of Year 6 pupils was well above the national average. The school made very good use of the booster classes for that cohort. This, however, is not the current position. The current cohort of Year 6 pupils has a high proportion of pupils on the special educational needs register and evidence gathered in this inspection indicates that attainment of the pupils will be close to the national average by the time they leave school.

83. There are no significant differences in the achievements of girls and boys. The overall progress of the pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, is good at both key stages.

84. A key issue in the school's last inspection report was to improve the opportunities for the pupils at Key Stage 2 to engage in investigational work. This issue has been satisfactorily addressed and there are now more opportunities for the pupils to be engaged in practical activities where they can use and develop their mathematical knowledge. This has had a positive effect on raising standards. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and is now good at both key stages. Consequently the pupils often make good progress in their learning.

85. By age seven, the pupils can work out simple problems involving number operations and money. They understand place value to a hundred and the higher attaining pupils are beginning to carry out some calculations using these numbers. The pupils use different methods for calculating, such as using their knowledge of how addition facts can help to solve subtraction problems. When considering shapes they know the names and simple properties of a range of two-dimensional shapes. They estimate and measure using non-standard and standard units and use these skills when making a moving model of a teddy bear. The pupils use their data collection knowledge in other subjects such as science where they form and interpret a graph of favourite foods. Set diagrams are used in both Years 1 and 2 to show the differences and similarities between things that they are studying in other subjects. For example, in Year 1, the pupils use them in science to show groupings of foods with different types of tastes, and in music to communicate which objects make long and short sounds.

86. By age eleven, the pupils calculate and solve problems involving decimals to two places. They know the relationship between fractions, decimals and percentages. The pupils make their number calculations using different methods, such as using a partitioning method when multiplying larger numbers. They work well with co-ordinates in one quadrant and make satisfactory progress in working at a higher level within all four quadrants. Their co-ordinates knowledge is also used in geography when they work on mapping for their residential visit on the Isle of Wight. The pupils know about reflective and rotational symmetry. Higher attaining pupils use a good range of properties when

describing shapes and good teaching has given them the confidence to exploring different properties for themselves. Some terms used to describe properties, such as 'bisect' and 'adjacent' are however not fully understood. They can measure in various standard measurements and use these skills to solve problems. In their data handling work the pupils collect information and communicate this using different graphical representation. The pupils can interpret the information from graphs but have limited experience beyond answering direct literal questions. The pupils know how to calculate the data collection measurements of mean, median, mode and range. Graphical skills are used in other subjects such as science, where graphs are used to show the results of heartbeat and friction experiments.

87. The quality of teaching is good. During this inspection the teaching was good or very good in over 80 per cent of the lessons and was good overall. Only one lesson was unsatisfactory. The teachers are implementing the structures of the Numeracy Strategy well and this has helped to raise standards. The teachers show in their use of language, explanations and careful questioning that they have a good knowledge and understanding of mathematics. For instance in a Year 6 lesson the teacher stressed important number concepts and encouraged the pupils' to use and share different strategies to solve mental arithmetic problems. In some lessons the teacher discusses with the pupils at the beginning what they are going to learn and this helps to focus the pupils' attention on their learning. Sometimes these objectives also form part of the final recap of the lesson and consolidate what the pupils have learnt. In most lessons the teachers' expectations of their pupils are good and well matched to their abilities. For instance in one Year 2 lesson a pupil with special educational needs was engaged in work that related well to one of the targets in his Individual Education Plan. However, some pupils' work in Year 3 shows that there is sometimes a need to match work more accurately to the pupils' abilities.

88. At both key stages the teachers' management and discipline of the pupils is good. The pupils respond positively to this, showing good attitudes to their work and good behaviour. This means that the pupils' learning is well supported because they are more attentive to what they are being taught and the tasks they have to complete. The teachers give high levels of deserved praise that encourages learning and raises the self-esteem of pupils. In most lessons the pupils relate well to each other and their teachers, and they co-operate well with each other when asked to do so in their work.

89. In the very good lessons the pace of learning is brisk and the pupils are kept actively engaged in appropriately challenging and stimulating tasks, from which they gain a feeling of success. In these lessons the teacher's enthusiasm enlivens the work of the pupils and raises their enjoyment for learning. When the teaching is unsatisfactory the pace of pupils learning is too slow. This is the result of work that is not suitably matched to pupils' abilities, and work sheets that are confusing and too difficult. Time is lost in these lessons because of too many unnecessary interruptions by pupils.

90. The co-ordinator, who has only had this responsibility for a very short time, presents a very good example in her teaching. She is committed to the continued improvement of pupils' attainment in mathematics, especially at Key Stage 1 where attainment still remains below average. She has not yet monitored the teaching of mathematics in the school or the standard of the pupils' work, but plans to do so this academic year. The co-ordinator recognises that information and communication technology is not used sufficiently to support learning. Although regular assessments of the pupils' progress and standards take place, this is not rigorously analysed to inform teachers about areas for future development.

SCIENCE

91. The overall picture is one of great improvement since the last inspection when pupils' attainment was below the national average at the end of both key stages. The pupils have benefited from the greater opportunities to investigate and experiment since the last inspection and pupils now make good progress in both key stages. Standards are average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6.

92. The scrutiny of work and observation of lessons indicate that by the age of seven the pupils know that different materials are used for different purposes and are able to make informed choices when presented with a range of options. They are aware of the importance of a good diet and know that it is important to drink water and eat a variety of foods. As the pupils progress through the school they are able to use their knowledge to make informed decisions and predictions before testing out their ideas. The pupils in Year 6 are able to prove, when carrying out experiments relating to their work on friction, that the biggest or most expensive trainers do not necessarily have the best grip. When experimenting with air resistance, they know that the bigger the piece of plastic that they provide for a parachute, the longer that it will stay in the air. In Year 6, the pupils have very clear ideas relating to the rules of a scientific experiment. For example, when carrying out practical tasks to answer the question "Do heavier objects fall faster than lighter ones?" they are able to explain why the classroom is not an ideal place to prove their theories and suggest that Blackpool tower would be a better place!

93. The quality of the teaching is good. The teachers show enthusiasm for the subject, recap well on previous work and make good use of questions that encourage the pupils to think for themselves. In the best lessons seen the pupils were allowed sufficient time to work individually or in groups on a range of tasks, after the well planned introduction and clear guidelines. In a Year 2 lesson the pupils knew exactly what was expected of them when sorting materials and Year 6 pupils are reminded of the "six key points" relating to an experiment. Individual thought is encouraged and the pupils display a good deal of initiative and make logical predictions. Answers and outcomes not always expected are valued, and this was the case in Year 2 when pupils found other ways to sort the materials provided. In Year 4 pupils tested the strength of a range of flour and predicted, correctly, that "the weakest flour will spread out the furthest". The teacher then used the opportunity to link the result to the wider curriculum when explaining that just as people are different wheat differs also.

94. The pupils are given the opportunity to record their experiments within an agreed framework and, at the upper end of the school, in their own words. This is particularly noticeable in Year 6 where the teachers' prompting leads to further conclusions being drawn from the experiments. However, at the lower end of Key stage 2 there is evidence of over prescriptive recording, with written work that is both copied and undifferentiated, within a class and across the year group. This limits the pupils' progress.

95. The curriculum has been reviewed, and much of it re-written by the co-ordinator since the last inspection, and this provides the basis of the structured approach to the subject. Assessment tasks are carried to ensure that the pupils have fully understood what has been taught. The results are recorded and the information is used to plan the next series of lessons. Resources for the subject are good. The combination of the above mentioned positive points has done much to raise the standards in the subject during the past three years. Too little use is made of information and communication technology to support learning.

ART AND DESIGN

96. The standard achieved in art at the end of both key stages is satisfactory and the pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress. This shows a good improvement since the previous inspection when attainment at the end of both key stages was unsatisfactory. The pupils' work in three dimensions, including the use of clay, is less developed than their pencil, pastel and painting work. The pupils' artwork is often displayed to good effect around the school. Good displays of other subjects are enhanced by pupils work in art. For example, when good quality Year 5 Tudor portraits, which are formed as sketches and collages, are displayed.

97. By the age of seven, the pupils can use different media in their work. They can create simple portraits having regard for line and tone. The pupils sketch from real life, such as when they use the school environment. They also work from photographs and from memory. They mix primary colours

to give a wider choice for their work, but they are not always encouraged to use these skills in their work. The pupils are aware that 'artists' paint pictures and they sometimes try to use the style of famous artists, such as L S Lowry, in their work. The pupils work carefully, such as when the Year 1 pupils use a thin brush to paint inside small boxes to see the effects of colour mixing. This is also seen in Year 2 when pupils work on their fabric printing designs that they will use for their calendars.

98. By the age of eleven, the pupils satisfactorily use different techniques and media in their observational and imaginative work. They know the work of famous artists and others, such as Katsushika Hokusai of Japan, who are from different cultures. The pupils use the styles of famous artists to produce some good pieces of work of their own. The pupils are beginning to make good use of their sketching books to try out different ideas and record new ideas and information. This is seen in the good work produced by Year 6 pupils when they paint a portrait in the style of Picasso. They do this after first using their sketchbook to draw and investigate possibilities for their final piece. In Year 5 this process can also be seen as the pupils draw sketches before completing their final collage portrait of one of Henry VIII's wives. Although three-dimensional work is less developed pupils are beginning to make more progress in this aspect of their work. In Year 6 pupils' skills in using wire to help construct action figures, develop well as the teacher shows them how to form, join and proportion their models.

99. The teaching of art is satisfactory and sometimes good. The teachers' planning is usually clear and at an appropriate level for the ability of the pupils. However, Information and communication technology is not used sufficiently to support learning. The pupils are busily engaged and interested in their work, and this motivates and helps them to learn. When the teaching is good, skills are carefully demonstrated and the teacher praises the efforts of the pupils, and says why they are being praised. This helps to motivate and direct the pupils learning towards the objectives of the lesson. In one good lesson the teacher used the experiences of the pupils when discussing how to overcome problems that had arisen during their work. This helped to reinforce and develop the pupils' skills. The co-ordinator is beginning to build up a portfolio of the pupils' work, as part of her monitoring role, to use as examples of what can be achieved. As yet, too little use is made of information and communication technology to support learning.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

100. Standards in design technology are satisfactory at the end of both key stages and the pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress throughout the school. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection period but further evidence was gained from examining pupils' work, teachers' planning and talking to teachers.

101. By the age of seven, the pupils design and make a framed calendar. This involves learning how to cut and join wood together, and how to cover the finished frame with fabric decorated using fabric paints. This is completed to a satisfactory standard and the pupils work carefully when completing their tasks. In Year 2 the pupils make a jointed Teddy out of card as part of their mathematics work on measurement. This helps the pupils' design and technology skills as it shows the need for careful measuring when they make things. Younger pupils make a card that has moving parts, such as sliding pictures and flaps. The pupils in Key Stage 1 also know how to use construction equipment to make moving models and how to make a simple moving vehicle out of boxes and card.

102. As the pupils progress through Key Stage 2 they become more familiar with the full process of how to design and make. In Years 3 and 4 the pupils look at different mechanisms for movement and know more about axles and wheels. The pupils in Year 4 make windmills and turning figures on a baseboard. They join wood, make axles and use cotton bobbins and elastic bands to drive the moving parts around. Before making their model the pupils draw designs and write lists of what materials and tools they will need. Year 5 pupils develop their knowledge of moving vehicles and produce good models that have electric motors, switches and drive mechanisms. They evaluate their models by

testing how far they can travel. Their designs do not however contain ideas about what criteria their model should meet. By the age of 11, the pupils design and make more complex structures and can test and improve components to add more strength. They design and make bridges, learning how to strengthen weaker materials using various structural designs. Their finished bridges are evaluated satisfactorily; one of the tests being how much weight the bridges can carry.

103. Only one lesson was observed during this inspection. This was taught by the design and technology co-ordinator and was a very good lesson. She created enthusiasm and curiosity in the pupils through her clear and detailed introduction to moving structures involving pulleys and linkages. The pace of learning was very good as pupils were thoroughly involved in their activities, which were enjoyable for the pupils and well directed to the objectives of the lesson. The teacher's management of pupils and resources was very good and the pupils reacted well to this, showing good concentration and application to their work.

104. The co-ordinator is very enthusiastic about her subject and is sure of its place as a valuable part of the school's curriculum. Although she monitors the teachers' planning, she has not formally monitored teaching or the pupils' work. There is no assessment and recording procedure and insufficient use is made of information and communication technology to support learning. The co-ordinator realises that these areas need to be addressed.

GEOGRAPHY

105. The standards attained by the pupils at both key stages now meet national expectations. The new co-ordinators have identified areas of the curriculum scheme that need fine-tuning and are clear about how to implement further development of the subject. This is a considerable improvement since the previous inspection. The revised curricular content and planning are enabling higher standards to be achieved. Important aspects, such as mapping skills, are now given sufficient emphasis to enable the pupils to reach an appropriate level of knowledge and understanding. This is beginning to make a significant impact on how the subject is taught and the pupils' learning.

106. Younger Key Stage 1 pupils compare their local environment with Barnaby Bear's holiday destinations. Similarities and differences in climate, landscape and food are investigated. The teachers appreciate the importance of discussion times and take the opportunity to encourage listening, speaking and the development of geographical language. During the key stage, the pupils are offered a range of practical experiences including visits that include designing routes, experiencing unusual types of houses and homes and travelling on different forms of transport. Daily routines in class encourage geographical awareness as pupils correct the class weather chart and decide how the daily climate will affect activities outside.

107. By Year 6, the pupils have studied a wide range of topics that conclude with a visit. They have a raised awareness of some important ecological issues and acquire more understanding of man's adverse impact on the environment. They study the area where they live and contrasting areas in the United Kingdom and abroad. The highlight of these studies for Years 5 and 6 is a residential trip to the Isle of Wight and the naval docklands in Portsmouth. This enables pupils to gain first hand experience of life in a contrasting locality, whilst planning activities, designing routes and practising more complicated mapping skills. The teachers are aware of the need to improve opportunities for the development of research skills and the use of information control technology to support this successful topic work.

108. The quality of the pupils' recorded work does not always meet the expected standard because of insufficient writing skills to support effective learning. A few pupils have difficulty acquiring and retaining a range of geographical terms and ideas. Sometimes they confuse historical and geographical information. The teachers compensate well for this by offering a range of pictorial evidence as an explanation of written examples. Extra adult support during lessons also helps to reinforce the main

teaching points for these groups of pupils. However, there are times when lower attaining pupils and those who have special educational needs would benefit from additional word prompts to aid their writing

109. The teaching overall is satisfactory, although during the inspection, the quality of teaching and learning was often good. In both key stages, the teachers prepared activities carefully and successfully guided pupils as they learnt new skills. In the most effective lessons, the teachers helped the pupils to learn by leading them systematically through the subject matter. Most of the time, the teaching provides the pupils with a suitably organised and managed set of learning activities that encourage them to work well. Because of the emphasis placed on the development of oral skills, some pupils in both key stages are becoming increasingly confident when answering questions and are keen to talk about visits to Bilston shopping centre or Avoncroft. However, the pupils are less competent when identifying and using sources of information, such as reference books, libraries, videos or the Internet.

HISTORY

110. Standards in history have improved since the last inspection. Attainment is similar to most schools at the end of both key stages. Although some pupils find it hard to express their ideas and thoughts in writing, the teachers maximise opportunities for learning from first hand experiences. This raises the potential for successful participation in topics and increases the pupils' knowledge and understanding of historical facts and events.

111. In both key stages the focus on practical experiences means that the pupils are offered many opportunities to formulate ideas based on what they do or see. For example, in Key Stage 1 the pupils' learning begins with a comparison of how they have changed since they were babies. Although they talk enthusiastically about their families and events that are important to them, they find it difficult to make connections between things that happen now with past and future events. When they recall past events they have enjoyed, they are encouraged to give reasons for why things happen and this helps their understanding of the concept of historical data which is deepened and extended as they fully participate in their learning. Older Key Stage 1 use the local environment to research change in Bilston. They follow the history trail and search for clues to identify similarities and differences from the past. Pupils learn effectively because they enjoy their lessons, particularly the introductory discussions and role-play situations.

112. The programme of planned visits and study days is high quality. In Year 3, a visit to Avoncroft enables pupils to combine their geography and history skills effectively. Older Key Stage 2 visits the Black Country Museum to experience life in Victorian times in greater detail. These trips and visits are further complemented by the living history days that take place as part of the normal school curriculum. Year 4 experience how it feels to be a Roman soldier as they collect prepared back packs and march in the playground carrying the heavy load. Year 6 spend the afternoon dressed as Victorian children, sit in rows, learning by rote, whilst obeying the commands of their over-strict teachers. The use of information and communication technology as a resource and the pupils' personal research skills are underdeveloped.

113. Older, higher attaining pupils show a growing knowledge of chronology as they discuss similarities and differences between the clothes worn at school today with those worn a hundred years ago, suggesting some disadvantages that Victorian pupils had with their mode of dress. Slowly, with carefully chosen questions and sufficient praise to boost confidence, the pupils find the right vocabulary to express exactly what they mean. In this way, pupils are encouraged to sequence events and organise and communicate their ideas. Although the overall quality of teaching is satisfactory, the teachers are skilled in their application of this aspect of the curriculum. This has a significant impact on the quality of pupils' learning throughout school particularly for those pupils with special educational needs.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

114. Standards of attainment in information and communication technology are below what would normally be expected at Key Stage 1 and well below those expected at Key Stage 2. The teaching staff's expertise in information technology has developed satisfactorily since the last inspection report and their planning, by using a new scheme of work, is helping to ensure full coverage of the curriculum. Improvement since the last inspection has therefore been satisfactory in addressing these issues. Improvement in the use of information and communication technology in other subjects, and the attainment of the pupils at both key stages has been unsatisfactory. The school recognises that these are still priority areas for future development. The school's new computer room is being used satisfactorily and is enabling more focused skills teaching to occur. Evidence gained during this inspection shows that the quality of learning is improving. However, too little use is made of the computers that are in or near the classrooms and this means that the pupils have too few opportunities to practise their skills and use them in other subjects. The school now has an assessment and recording procedure, which when fully established will enable the pupils' progress in acquiring skills, and their experiences, to be tracked.

115. By the age of seven, the pupils use the control mouse with satisfactory skill. They use option bars in a drawing program to choose shapes and colours. They click, drag and resize simple shapes that they have drawn. The pupils fill shapes with colour and some have discovered how to create different effects such as stripes. Word processing skills are limited and the pupils have little knowledge of processes using arrow keys, scroll bars or spell checkers. The pupils' have little experience of using data handling programs and as a result their skills in collecting, editing and sorting are limited. They control a programmable moving vehicle by inputting step-by-step instructions.

116. By the age of eleven the pupils log on to specific program packages. They open, save and close files, but some pupils still need support in this. In their word processing work the pupils change the style and sizes of fonts and can add simple pictures to their work. The pupils have limited skills in other areas of word processing such as changing formats by using rulers or layout styles. They also lack experience in moving, copying and pasting texts. The pupils word processing skills are used in English, for instance in Year 6, when pupils write an account of the sinking of the Titanic. Their skills and use of data handling techniques is unsatisfactory. Opportunities in other subjects to use data handling programs are not taken and so the pupils' learning is restricted. The pupils' knowledge and use of control and monitoring programs, and equipment, is poor. These areas are at a very early stage of development. The pupils' skills and use of spreadsheets is improving and is satisfactory. They input data and write simple formulae to calculate costings in a shopping list. Amounts are then changed and the pupils examine how the spreadsheet they have formed reacts to these changes. Higher attaining pupils use the 'function option' to discover quicker ways to write formulae.

117. During this inspection the teaching of information and communication technology was observed only in the new computer room. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. The teachers have suitable knowledge and expertise at the levels they are working. Their explanations, questioning and answers to problems enables the pupils to make steady gains in their learning. The pace of the pupils' learning is mainly satisfactory and occasionally very good. In some lessons the progress of learning is slowed when the organisation of the lesson gives some pupils limited opportunity to use the computers. Progress in acquiring computer skills is also slowed when the teacher uses their limited access time in the computer room to use programs that give practice exercises for learning in other subjects. In these lessons information and communication technology skills are less well taught or developed and this is not an efficient use of the information and communication technology suite.

118. When the teaching is very good the teacher's introduction links the present lesson to previous learning. The whole class is taught the skills and knowledge they are going to need to start on the tasks they will be given. In these lessons the teacher often uses pupils to demonstrate skills, and this increases the pupils' interest and motivation. The teacher gives clear explanations and instructions and

sets tasks that are challenging but attainable. In these very good lessons the pupils are actively engaged and the teacher's management and discipline is very good and features high levels of praise. The pupils in these lessons are excited and anxious to get on with their work. When they are working they stay on task, and when working with a partner they co-operate very well. During these lessons the teacher gives good inputs to groups and the class to help them overcome problems and to learn new skills. It is very noticeable in these lessons that the pupils have the confidence to explore further, on their own, the things that the computer can do.

119. The co-ordinator offers a very good teaching model for her subject. She realises that standards overall are unsatisfactory and she is committed to raising them. She accepts that the pupils have little experience of using information and communication technology for research and that too little use is made of computers to support work in science, for example in monitoring experiments. Planned staff training will further enhance the teachers' own information and communication technology skills, and the co-ordinator is also very anxious to develop good teaching strategies.

MUSIC

120. The standards the pupils attain by the end of both key stages are in line with those expected nationally, and they make satisfactory progress in gaining musical skills, understanding and knowledge. This is a similar picture to that found at the time of the previous inspection. All the pupils, including those with special educational needs have opportunities to take part in a range of musical activities.

121. By the time they are seven, the pupils sing a good range of songs and they enjoy adding actions to the words. The pupils successfully sustain rhythms whilst listening, playing or singing. They know the names of a variety of percussion instruments and how to play them. Throughout the school, the pupils enjoy singing an increasing repertoire of songs and hymns and take part enthusiastically in singing sessions. They sing tunefully and with expression. By the time they leave the school, the pupils have had opportunities to devise simple compositions, play a range of tuned and untuned percussion instruments and evaluate their performances. They make steady progress in learning, understanding and applying musical terms such *tempo* and *dynamics*. The pupils listen carefully to recorded music and use an appropriate vocabulary to discuss and appraise it. Overall the pupils respond well to music. They are eager to get involved in singing and in instrumental activities. However in some lessons the older pupils find it hard on occasions to remain focused and attentive throughout the lessons. There are opportunities to listen to a wide range of musical styles in lessons and assemblies which pupils do with attention and enjoyment.

122. The quality of the teaching is satisfactory overall. In one of the three lessons seen the teaching was good. There were no lessons in which the teaching was unsatisfactory. The teachers have clear plans for what they want the pupils to learn and make good use of resources such as taped music and instruments. Where the best teaching was seen, the teacher had very good management of the pupils. This enabled them to make good progress in controlling the volume of their voices and when playing percussion instruments. The school has several teachers with musical knowledge and skills. They use their talents well to play the piano in assemblies, take music lessons, and run the after-school recorder club and choir. The school is following the national guidelines on what to teach in music lessons. It has recently introduced a commercial scheme of work to support the non-specialist teachers. This gives clear guidance on how the music curriculum can be planned and taught and provides CDs to extend the teachers' repertoire of musical provision for the pupils.

123. The subject manager has only recently taken over the co-ordination of the subject throughout the school. She is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and plans to check how well teaching and learning in music is progressing and decide what needs improving. The school enhances the opportunities the pupils have to participate in musical activities by making available a good range of activities outside normal lessons. In addition to these clubs run by teachers the school ensures that the pupils have regular opportunities to experience live music played by professional groups. The school makes effective use of visiting teachers to provide weekly lessons in playing the violin and recorder which are paid for by the parents. These features taken together with the class music lessons and assemblies

ensure that the musical curriculum makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development. The teaching makes good use of the basic range of traditional percussion instruments available. The range of instruments from other cultures and musical traditions is, however, limited.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

124. By the end of both key stages the pupils achieve standards that are in line with national expectations. This shows an improvement when compared with the previous inspection, when standards at the end of Key Stage 1 were unsatisfactory. Little teaching was seen in Key stage 1 but from the evidence gathered, including the standards achieved at the beginning of Key Stage 2, it is clear that the teaching is sound and that the pupils make satisfactory progress. Pupils display good control, move lightly around the hall and enjoy working with a partner on range of activities. During a Year 2 dance lesson they showed the ability to co-ordinate hand and feet movements in a rhythmic sequence.

125. Teaching is satisfactory at Key Stage 2 and the pupils continue to make sound progress. By the age of eleven the pupils display a satisfactory range of games and gymnastic skills. The sound teaching enables the pupils to develop their netball and football skills, along with the ability to use both the floor and apparatus for gymnastic activities. Pupils in Year 6 were observed carefully following the clear instructions in a ball handling skills lesson, and used the skills taught effectively and enthusiastically in a number of small group games. In a Year 4 gymnastics lesson the pupils benefited from the constant reinforcement of the lesson's key points, and the use by the teacher of pupils to demonstrate the good examples of poise and balance seen in the group activities. All pupils, with the exception of Year 6, attend the local swimming baths on a weekly basis and by the end of Year 5 most are able to swim. Pupils also have the opportunity to participate in out of school athletics, football and netball clubs.

126. There is currently no permanent co-ordinator for physical education, but an outline plan that highlights activities to be taught each term, is used to support both National and other guidelines. Indoor and outdoor facilities for teaching the subject are very good, with two halls and a large school field being available.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

127. The pupils' attainment is in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and the pupils make satisfactory progress in the subject in all years. This is an improvement on the previous inspection when standards were below.

128. The scheme of work for religious education forms a good basis for the teachers' planning and ensures that the subject is taught progressively throughout the school. The curriculum was unsatisfactory at the last inspection. Three themes are addressed each term and these provide the basis for the well-balanced approach to the symbolism, key people and celebrations related to Christianity and other major religions.

129. The quality of teaching is satisfactory with some good features. This again represents an improvement on the previous inspection when teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory. A particular feature of much of the teaching seen is the way that every opportunity is used to link the subject to the school's social and moral codes of practice and to everyday life. The teachers adopt a variety of approaches to maintain and develop the pupils' interest. This was particularly noticeable in the two Year 6 lessons observed where the teachers used their wedding photographs and wedding dresses to stimulate discussion on the values of marriage. The teachers related a Christian marriage to those of other religions and the pupils displayed a mature approach to the brainstorming session that gave them the opportunity to outline, in a sensible and mature manner, the values to be upheld in a marriage.

130. In Year 1, the class was encouraged to appreciate how religious beliefs differ yet share many similarities, when learning about Diwali and the pupils reflect thoughtfully when asked to consider special occasions and the meaning of light. Pupils in Year 2 were given a better understanding of the clothes worn at special occasions by being given the opportunity to act out their own “marriage ceremony”. In Year 5, the pupils displayed a good understanding of the need to support charities when introduced to the Muslim system of giving based on a fixed percentage of their savings. They value the chance to speak about the charities that are special to them and explain why.

131. The subject was inadequately resourced at the time of the last inspection but following a major investment, led by the co-ordinator, resources to support the subject are now good. This initiative, along with the improved curriculum guidelines, the improved teaching and the links with other aspects of school life has done much to raise standards across the school.